

## **ABSTRACT**

The layered schema design facilitates subsequent schema creation and can aid in homogenizing the properties of schemas that rely on it. The layered schema design provides a plurality of schemas that work together, but can be broken apart to allow for flexible access to desired properties without excess schema overhead. To accomplish this, schemas at the bottom layer providing the most basic and widespread schema properties, progressing to schemas at the top layer providing the most specialized and complex properties. Each intermediate layer provides a set of properties that can rely on the properties in the layers below it, but not on the layers above it. Each layer may also include a plurality of schemas with subsets of schema properties. This allows developers of new schemas to incorporate only so much of the layered schema design as necessary.